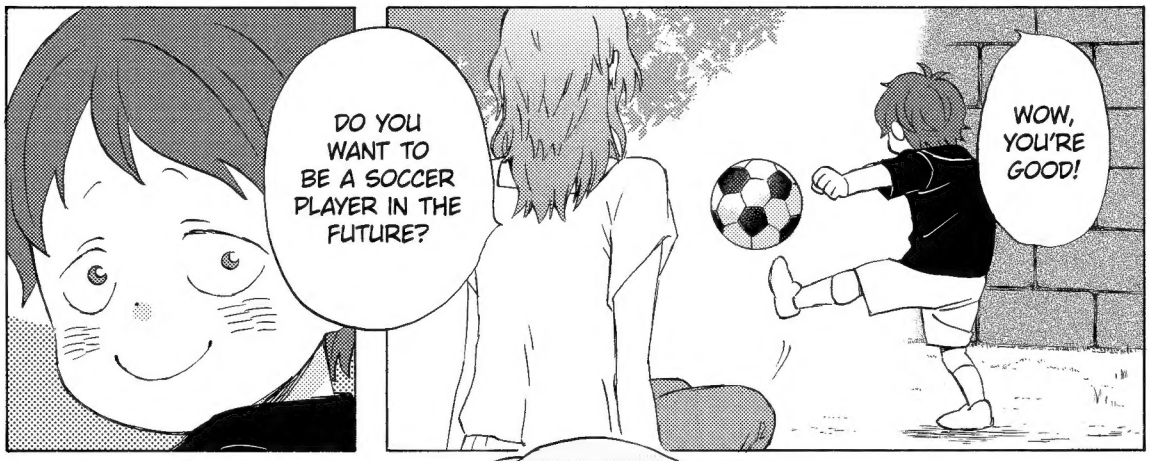
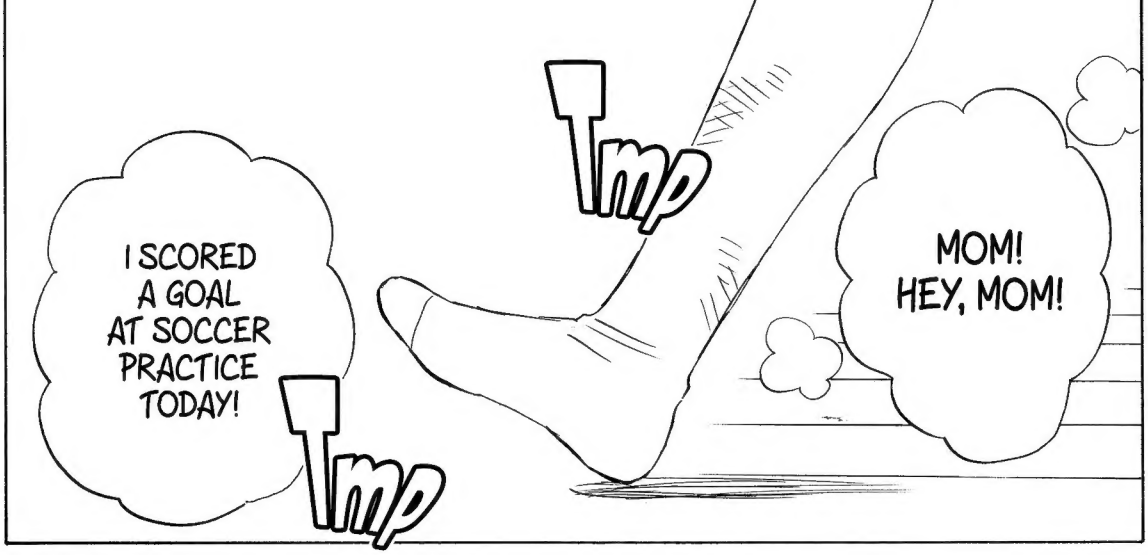
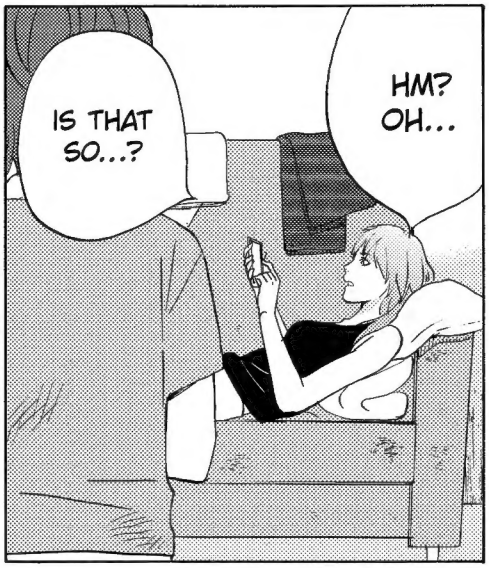
Chapter 43: Kirishima-kun and Miyake-kun, Part III




I SCORED A GOAL AT SOCCER PRACTICE TODAY!
Tmp
Tmp
MOM! HEY, MOM!

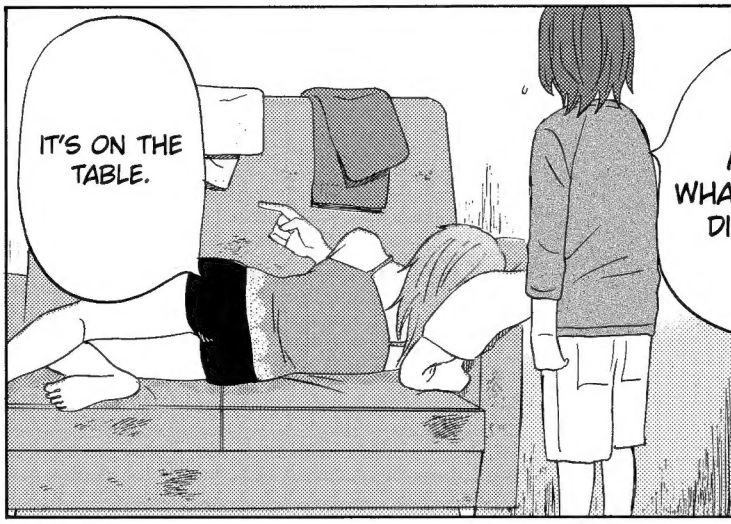
I WAS THINKING ABOUT HOW I WANTED TO HEAR YOUR VOICE.
OH! HELLO? YEAH, I'M FREE.
GREAT TIMING!

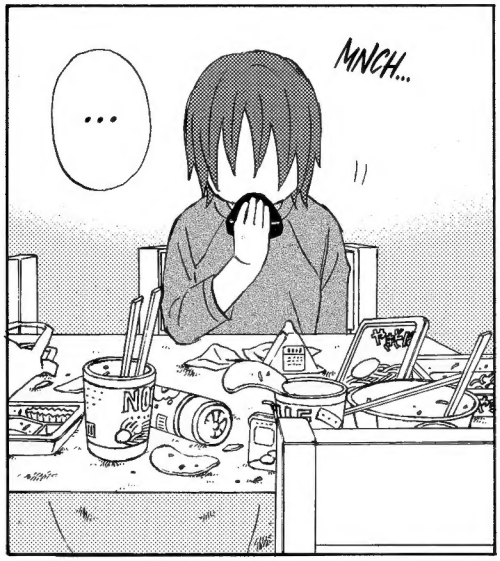
BRR RR

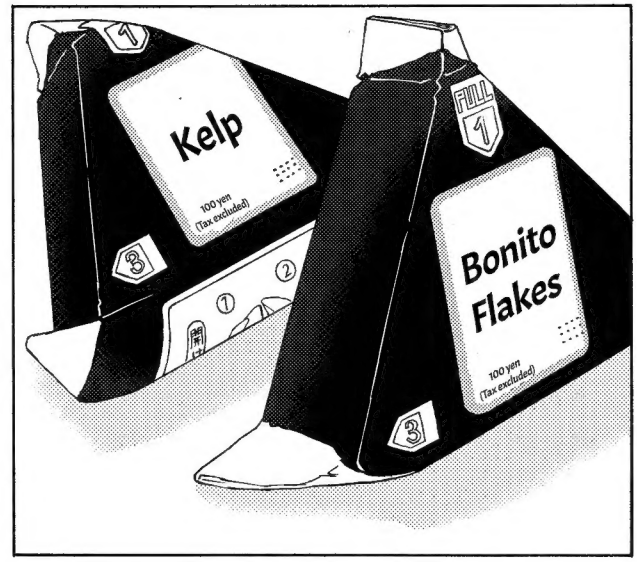

IS THAT SO...?
HM? OH...

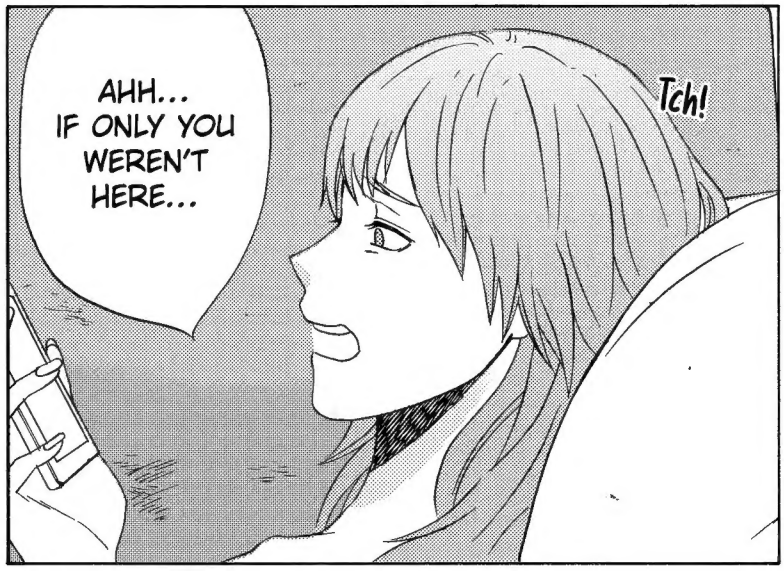
...
Ha ha ha ha!

WHAT? HEH HEH HEH... OH, PLEASE... YEAH... I KNOW...

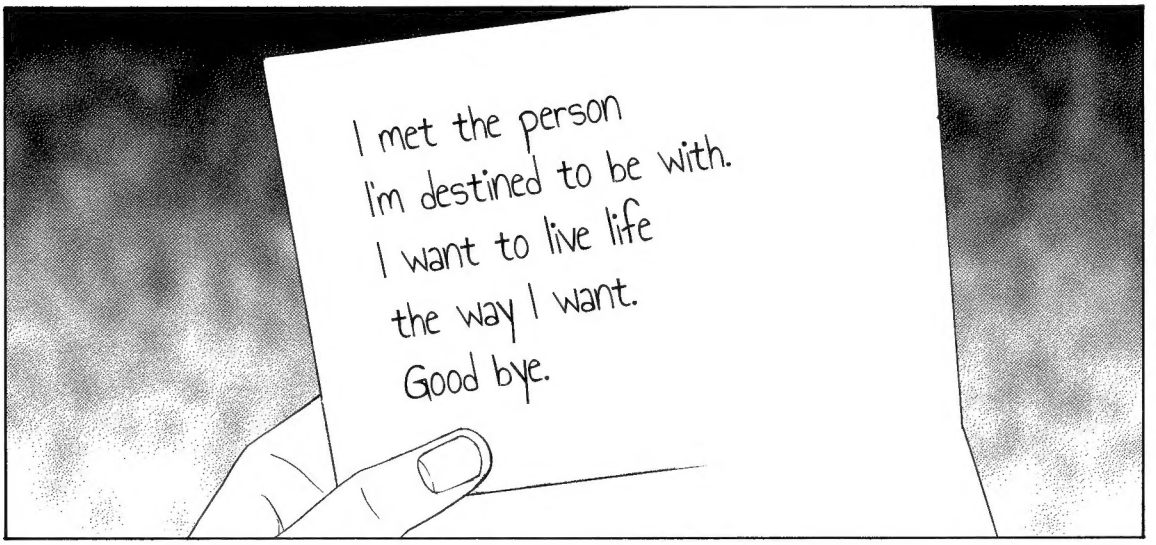

IT'S ON THE TABLE.
MOM! WHAT ABOUT DINNER?

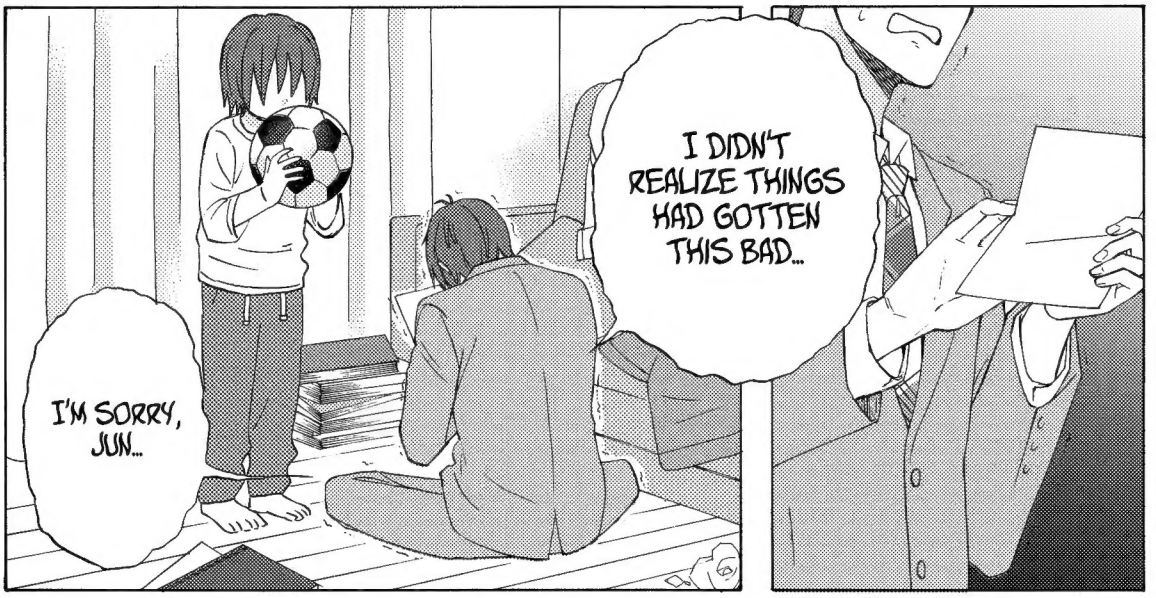

...
MNCH...

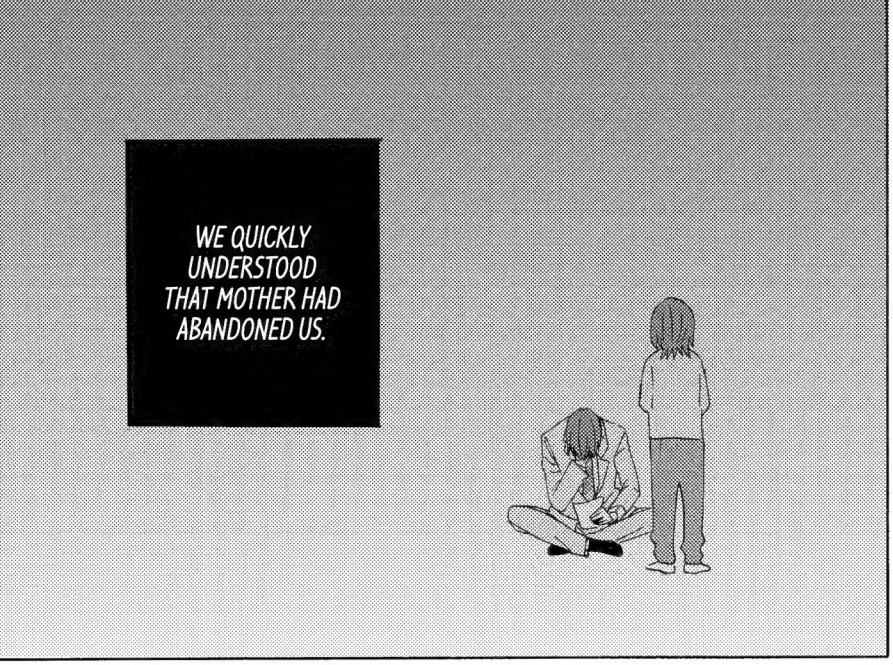

Kelp
100 yen (Tax excluded)
Bonito Flakes
100 yen (Tax excluded)


AHH... IF ONLY YOU WEREN'T HERE...
Tch!

WHY DID YOU HAVE TO BE BORN?

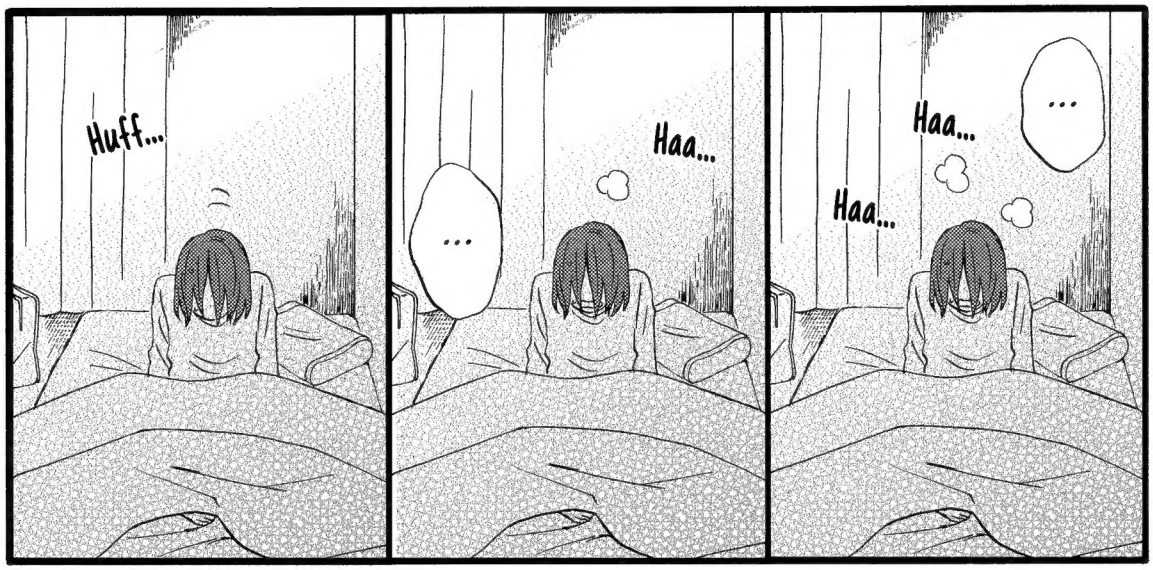

I met the person
I'm destined to be with.
I want to live life
the way I want.
Good bye.

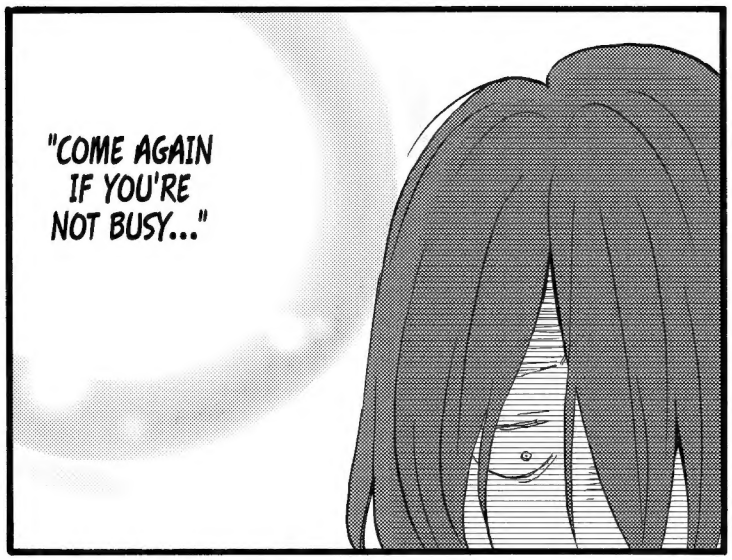

I'M SORRY, JUN...
I DIDN'T REALIZE THINGS HAD GOTTEN THIS BAD...


WE QUICKLY UNDERSTOOD THAT MOTHER HAD ABANDONED US.

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I SAW MY FATHER CRY.
Ughh...
WHY DID THIS HAPPEN...?

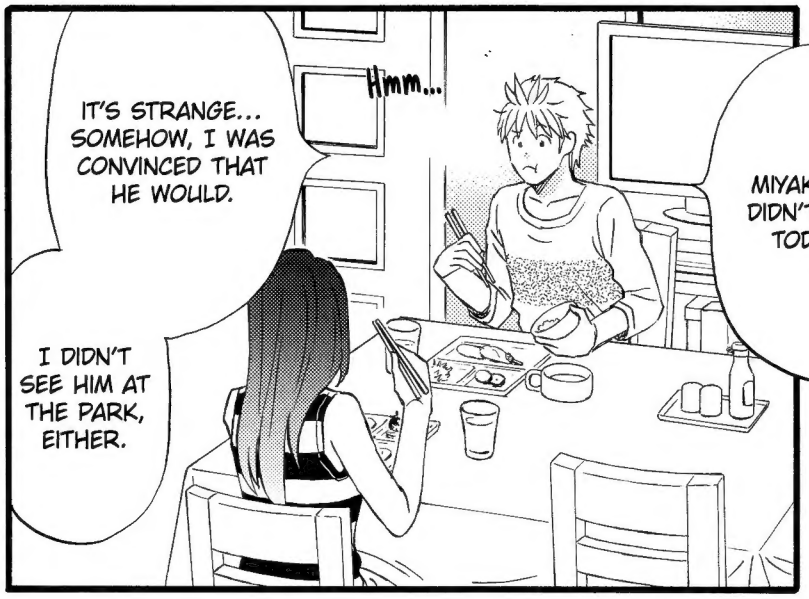
...AHH!


Huff...
Haa...
...
Haa...
Haa...
...

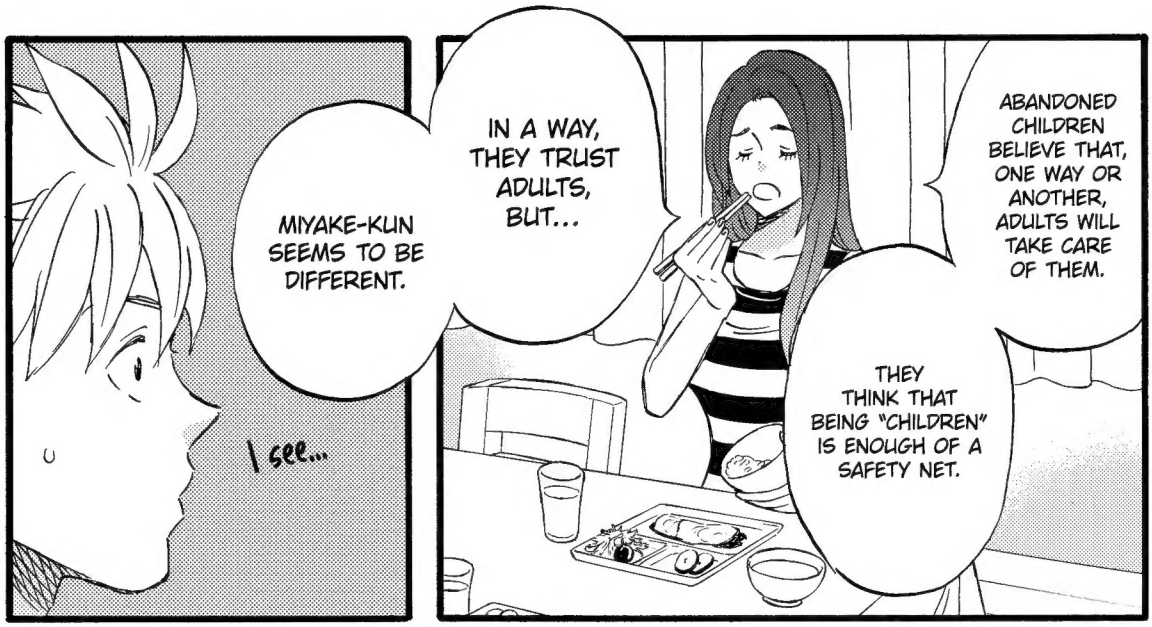

"COME AGAIN IF YOU'RE NOT BUSY..."

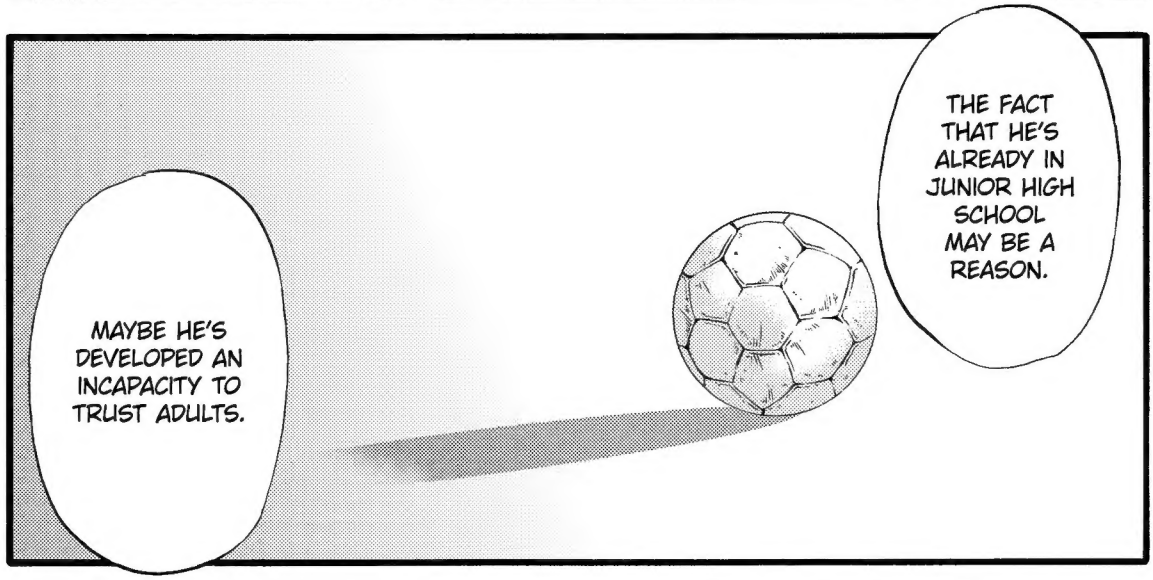
Gurgle...
Groooooowl...

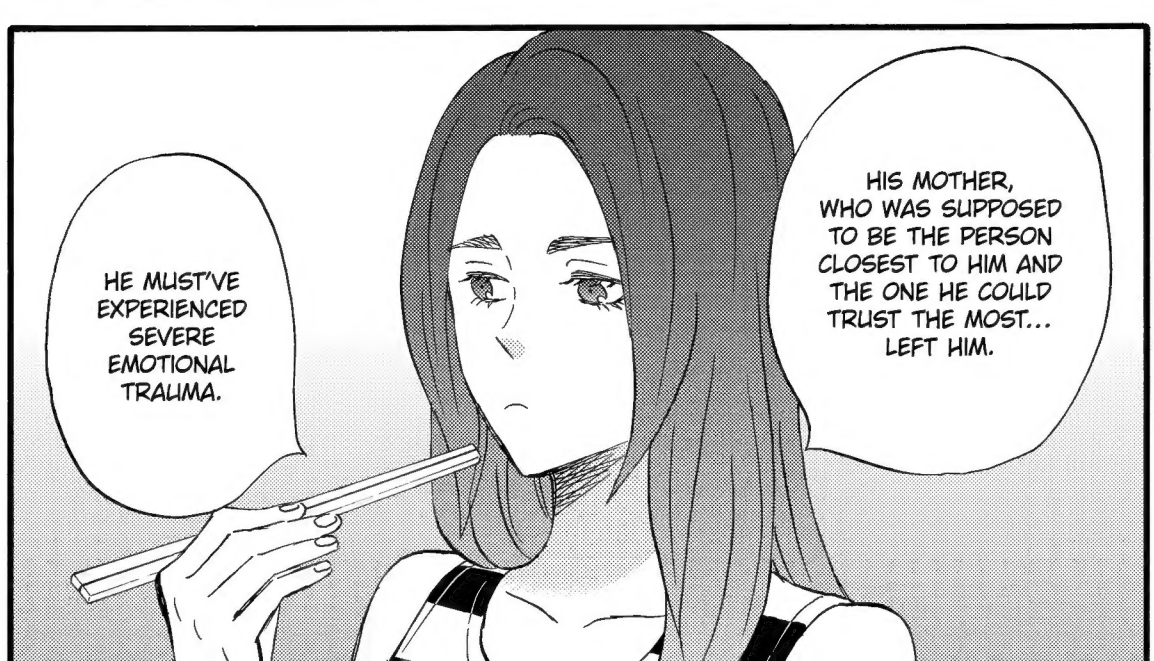
...NGH!

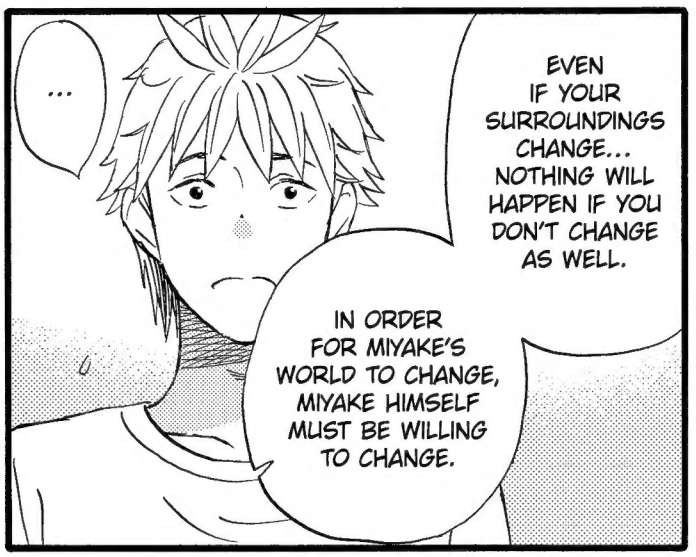

Hmm...
IT'S STRANGE... SOMEHOW, I WAS CONVINCED THAT HE WOULD.
I DIDN'T SEE HIM AT THE PARK, EITHER.

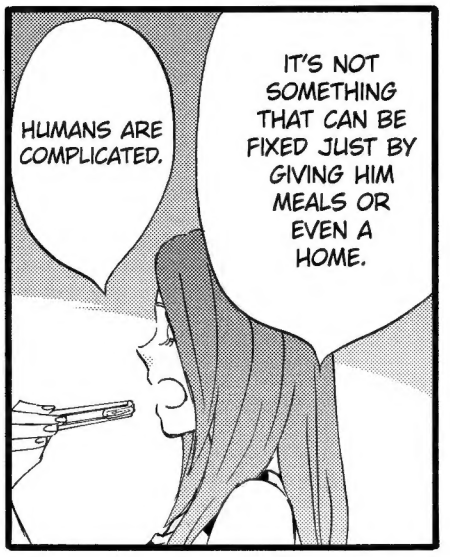
MIYAKE-KUN DIDN'T COME TODAY...

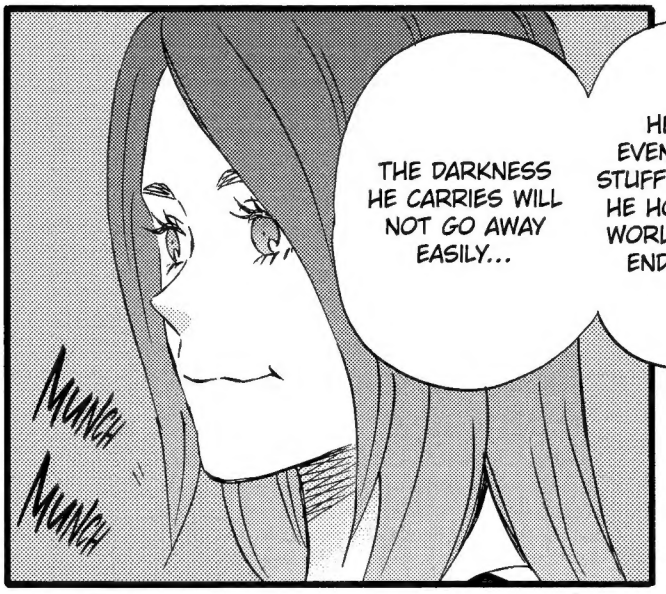

MIYAKE-KUN SEEMS TO BE DIFFERENT.
I see...
IN A WAY, THEY TRUST ADULTS, BUT...
ABANDONED CHILDREN BELIEVE THAT, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, ADULTS WILL TAKE CARE OF THEM.
THEY THINK THAT BEING "CHILDREN" IS ENOUGH OF A SAFETY NET.


THE FACT THAT HE'S ALREADY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL MAY BE A REASON.
MAYBE HE'S DEVELOPED AN INCAPACITY TO TRUST ADULTS.

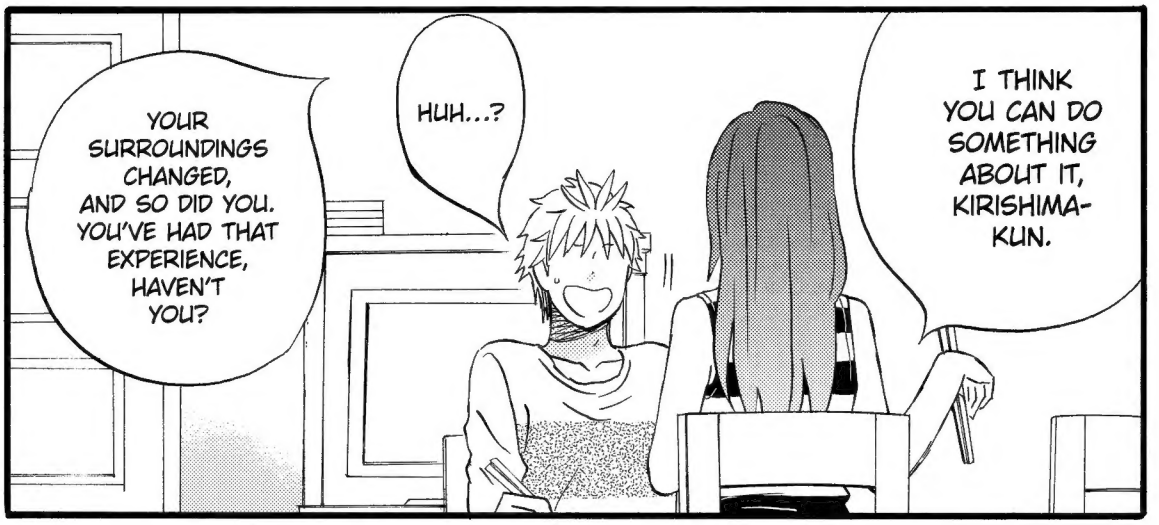

HIS MOTHER, WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE PERSON CLOSEST TO HIM AND THE ONE HE COULD TRUST THE MOST... LEFT HIM.
HE MUST'VE EXPERIENCED SEVERE EMOTIONAL TRAUMA.

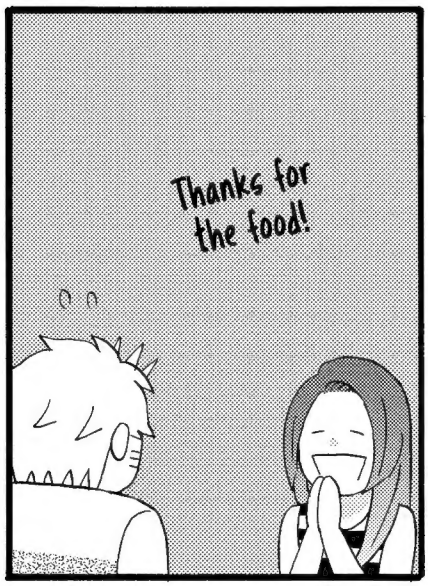

...
EVEN IF YOUR SURROUNDINGS CHANGE... NOTHING WILL HAPPEN IF YOU DON'T CHANGE AS WELL.
IN ORDER FOR MIYAKE'S WORLD TO CHANGE, MIYAKE HIMSELF MUST BE WILLING TO CHANGE.

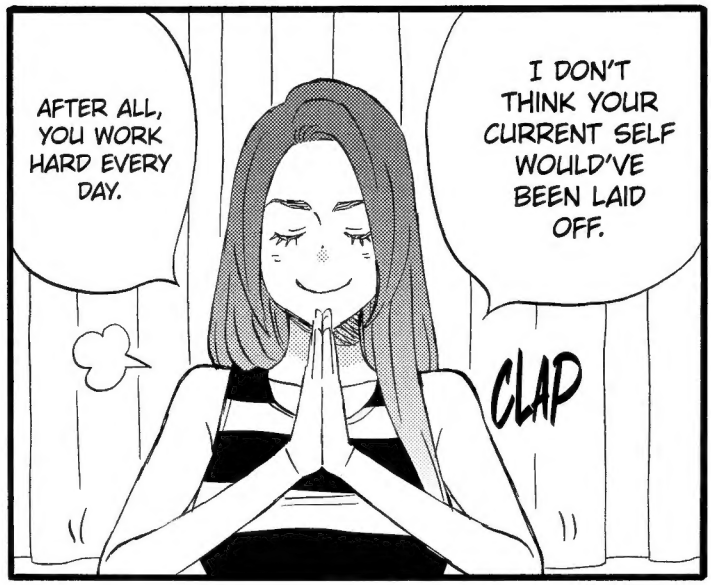

HUMANS ARE COMPLICATED.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT CAN BE FIXED JUST BY GIVING HIM MEALS OR EVEN A HOME.

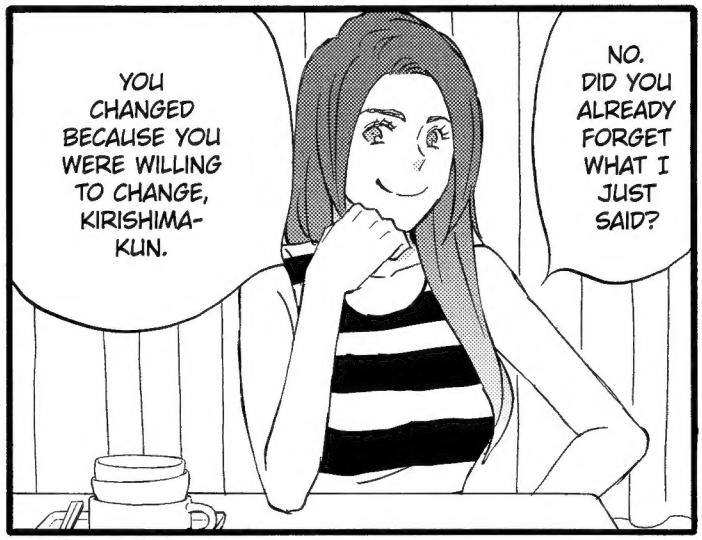

THE DARKNESS HE CARRIES WILL NOT GO AWAY EASILY...
HE WAS EVEN SAYING STUFF LIKE HOW HE HOPES THE WORLD WOULD END SOON.
MUNCH
MUNCH

RIGHT... THERE'S NOT MUCH WE CAN DO, THEN...

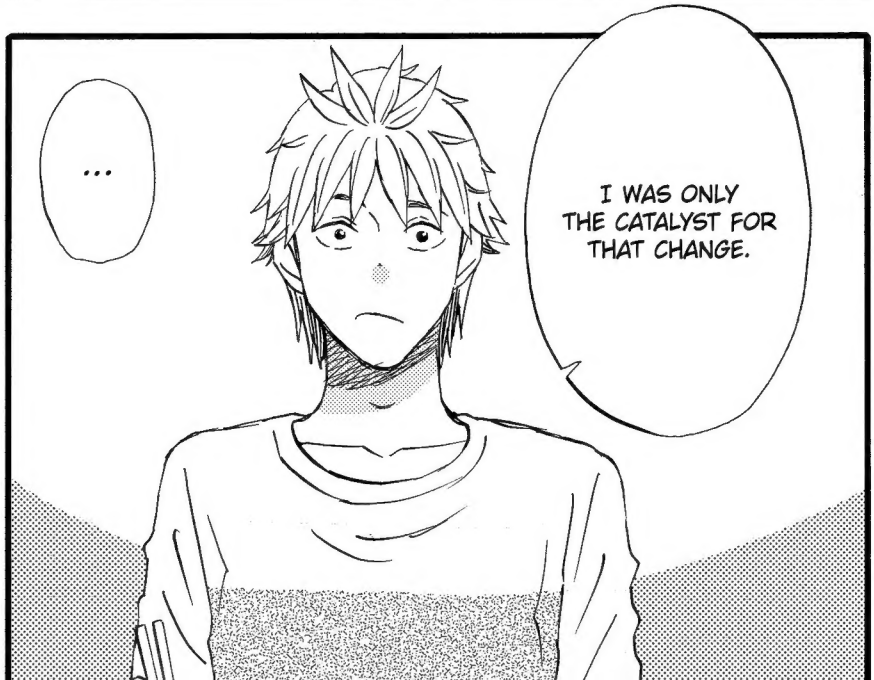

YOUR SURROUNDINGS CHANGED, AND SO DID YOU. YOU'VE HAD THAT EXPERIENCE, HAVEN'T YOU?
HUH...?
I THINK YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, KIRISHIMA-KUN.

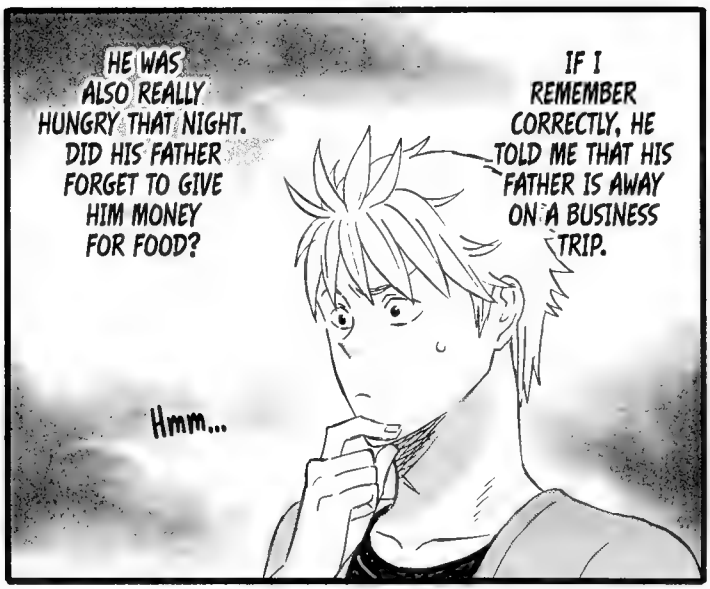

Thanks for the food!

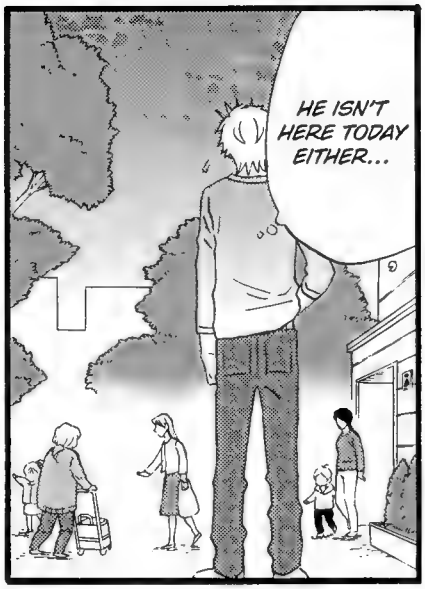

AFTER ALL, YOU WORK HARD EVERY DAY.
I DON'T THINK YOUR CURRENT SELF WOULD'VE BEEN LAID OFF.
CLAP

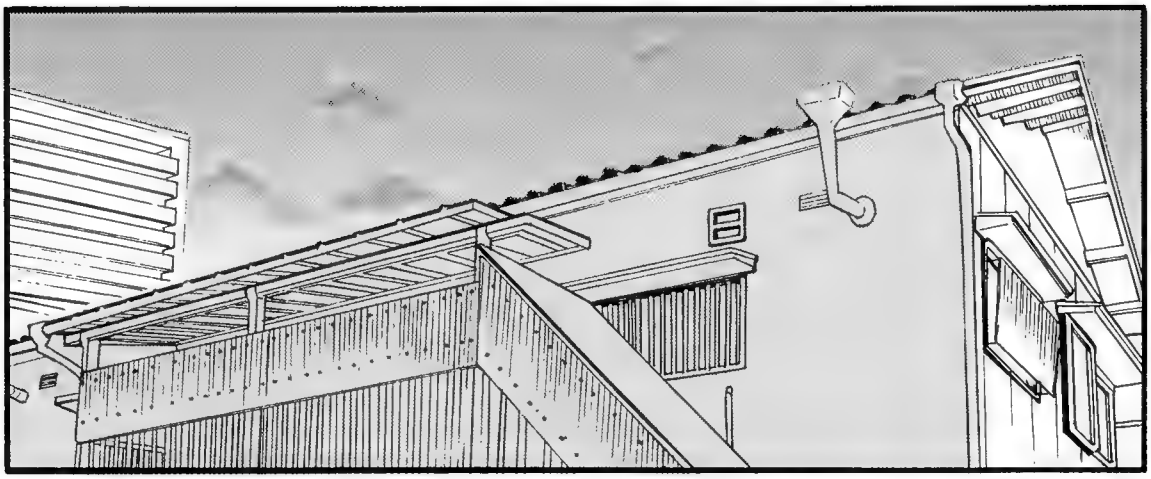

YOU CHANGED BECAUSE YOU WERE WILLING TO CHANGE, KIRISHIMA-KUN.
NO. DID YOU ALREADY FORGET WHAT I JUST SAID?

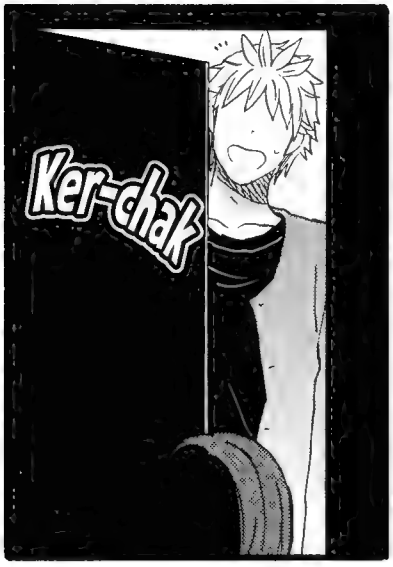
WELL... I ONLY CHANGED BECAUSE YOU GAVE ME A GOOD PUSH, ISHIMURA-SAN...
Always so honest...


...
I WAS ONLY THE CATALYST FOR THAT CHANGE.


HE WAS ALSO REALLY HUNGRY THAT NIGHT. DID HIS FATHER FORGET TO GIVE HIM MONEY FOR FOOD?
IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, HE TOLD ME THAT HIS FATHER IS AWAY ON A BUSINESS TRIP.
Hmm...


HE ISN'T HERE TODAY EITHER...



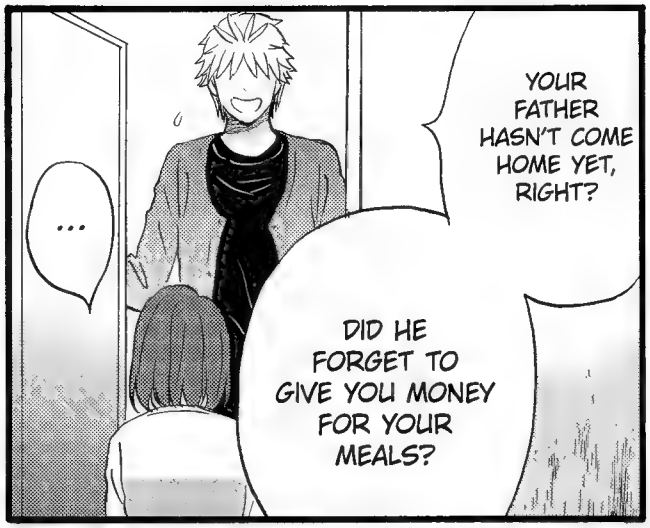

Ker-chak

Silence...

I TOLD HIM HE COULD COME WHENEVER HE WANTED, SO COMING TO PICK HIM UP MIGHT BE GOING TOO FAR.
Beeep

YOU DIDN'T GO TO THE PARK LIKE YOU USUALLY DO. ARE YOU FEELING SICK?
...NOT REALLY. I'M FINE...
OH! YOU'RE HOME. I'M GLAD!
...WHAT'S THE MATTER, KIRISHIMA-SAN?
WELL... I WAS JUST PASSING BY AND WONDERED IF EVERYTHING WAS OKAY...
UM... HOW ABOUT WE HAVE LUNCH TOGETHER AT MY PLACE?
I'M MAKING HAMBURGERS TODAY.
HAMBUR-GUERS...
Creak
NO, NO, NO... HOLD ON A SECOND, PLEASE!
I'M GOING TO HAVE LUNCH, SO...
I HATE HAMBURG-ERS...
THAT'S AN OBVIOUS LIE!
Groooooow...
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
...

BUT HE'S COMING BACK TOMORROW, SO I'LL BE FINE...
MY FATHER IS OFTEN CARELESS LIKE THAT...


YOUR FATHER HASN'T COME HOME YET, RIGHT?
...
DID HE FORGET TO GIVE YOU MONEY FOR YOUR MEALS?

IS THERE A REASON WHY YOU CAN'T?

UM... NO NEED TO FEEL SHY, YOU KNOW? YOU CAN COME WITH ME.
EVEN IF YOU TELL ME THAT...

...WHEN I'M WITH THE TWO OF YOU, I FEEL MISERABLE.
WHAT ...?

Ngh...

THAT'S RIGHT. WHEN I'M IN THE PRESENCE OF BLESSED PEOPLE, I REALIZE HOW PATHETIC I AM.

I FEEL ALL THE MORE MISERABLE WHEN PEOPLE ARE NICE TO ME OUT OF PITY.

Creak

IF YOU GET IT, GO HOME...

IF THE TWO OF YOU NEED SOMEONE MISERABLE SO YOU CAN PLAY THE "NICE PEOPLE" ROLE, YOU'LL HAVE TO LOOK ELSEWHERE.

SEEING YOU TWO SO ENGROSSED IN THAT SENSE OF SUPERIORITY PISSES ME OFF.

THAT'S A LOAD OF BULL! THOSE AREN'T YOUR TRUE FEELINGS, ARE THEY?!

Grab

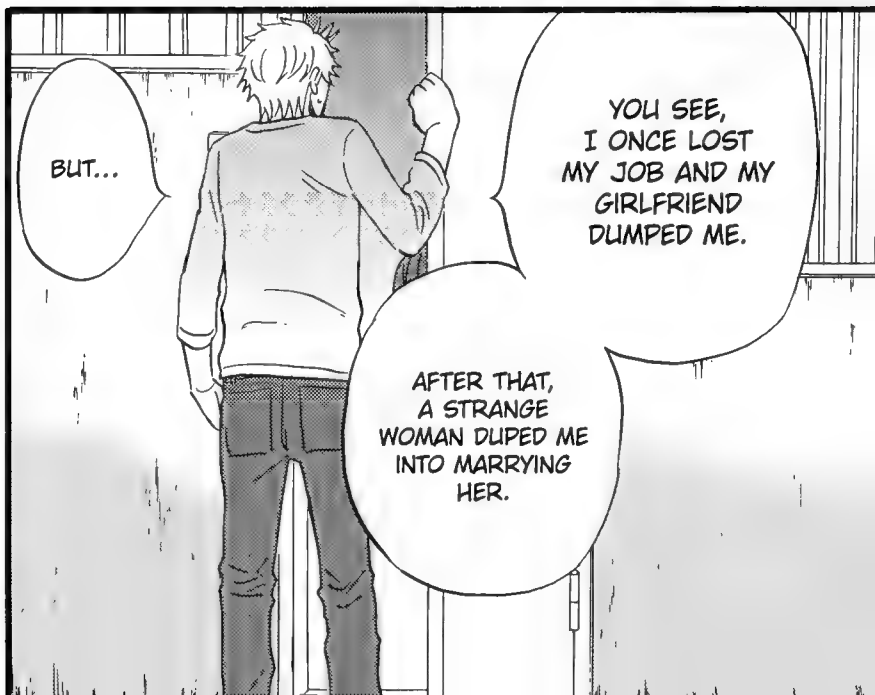
WHEN I TOLD YOU I WAS A HOUSEHUSBAND, YOU ENCOURAGED ME TO DO MY BEST!

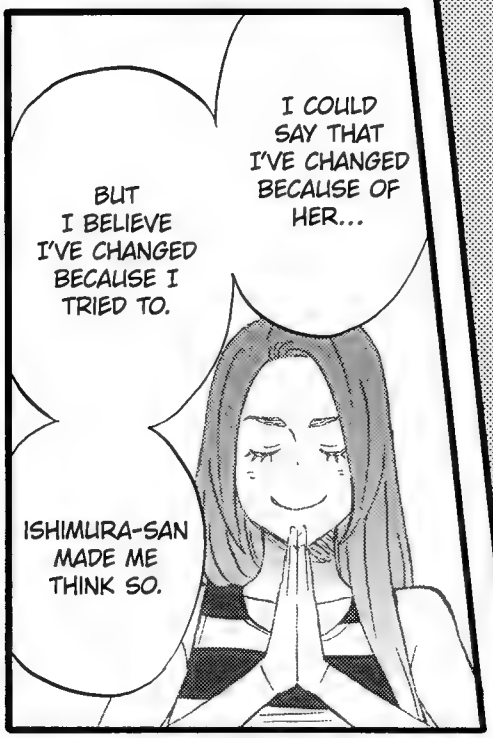
SO, NATURALLY, I HATE SEEING YOU IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION BECAUSE OF ADULT CIRCUMSTANCES...

I THOUGHT YOU WERE A GOOD BOY...
THAT'S... NOT SOMETHING PEOPLE USUALLY SAY TO SOMEONE THEY'VE JUST MET.

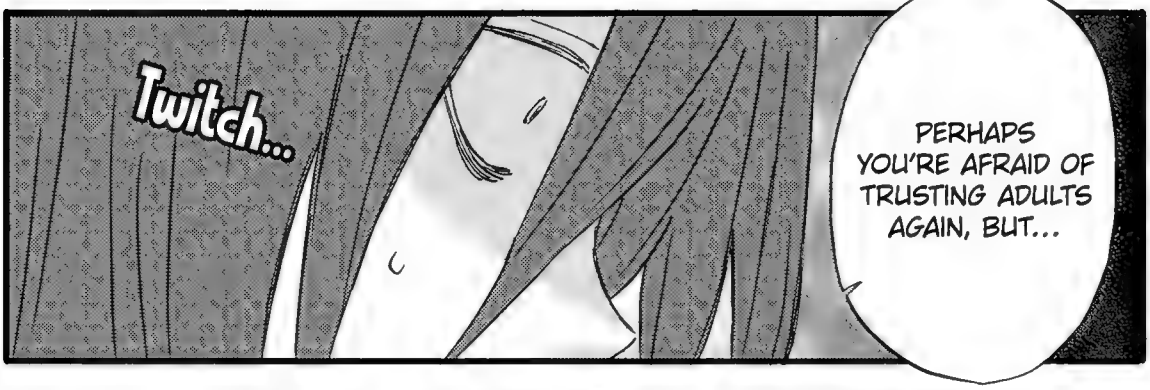
IF YOU DO, SOMETHING MIGHT CHANGE.
I KNOW I'M ONLY AN ADULT YOU'VE JUST MET, AND I'M PROBABLY BEING NOSY. BUT...
CAN YOU TRY TRUSTING ME?

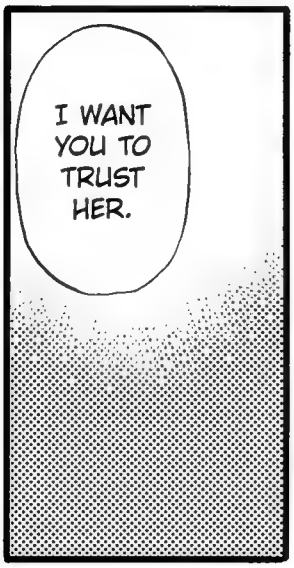
DEPENDING ON HOW YOU FEEL, YOUR WORLD CAN CHANGE AS MUCH AS YOU WANT IT TO.


BUT...
YOU SEE, I ONCE LOST MY JOB AND MY GIRLFRIEND DUMPED ME.
AFTER THAT, A STRANGE WOMAN DUPED ME INTO MARRYING HER.


I COULD SAY THAT I'VE CHANGED BECAUSE OF HER...
BUT I BELIEVE I'VE CHANGED BECAUSE I TRIED TO.
ISHIMURA-SAN MADE ME THINK SO.

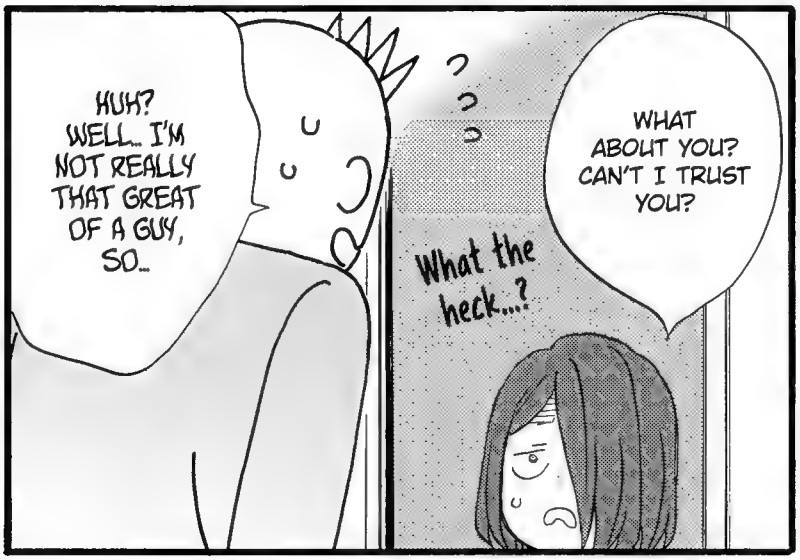
EVEN IF YOUR SURROUNDINGS CHANGE... YOUR WORLD WILL STAY THE SAME IF YOU DON'T TRY TO CHANGE YOURSELF.
I WAS ABLE TO DO SO AFTER MEETING ISHIMURA-SAN.


Twitch...
PERHAPS YOU'RE AFRAID OF TRUSTING ADULTS AGAIN, BUT...

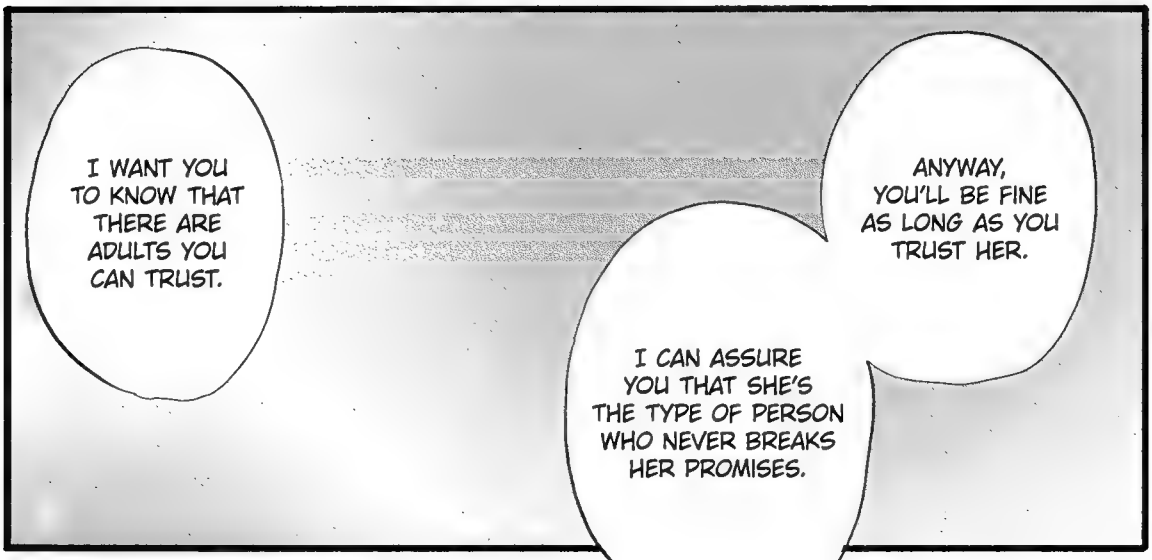

I WANT YOU TO TRUST HER.

"IF ONLY YOU WEREN'T HERE..."
"I LOVE YOU, JUN-KUN! YOU'RE MY TREASURE!"

IF YOU CAN TRUST ISHIMURA-SAN, YOU'LL BE OKAY...!!


HUH? WELL... I'M NOT REALLY THAT GREAT OF A GUY, SO...
WHAT ABOUT YOU? CAN'T I TRUST YOU?
What the heck...?

...


I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THERE ARE ADULTS YOU CAN TRUST.
ANYWAY, YOU'LL BE FINE AS LONG AS YOU TRUST HER.
I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT SHE'S THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO NEVER BREAKS HER PROMISES.

BUT...

...
WHEN YOU'RE HAVING A TOUGH TIME, IT'S OKAY TO RELY ON SOMEONE.

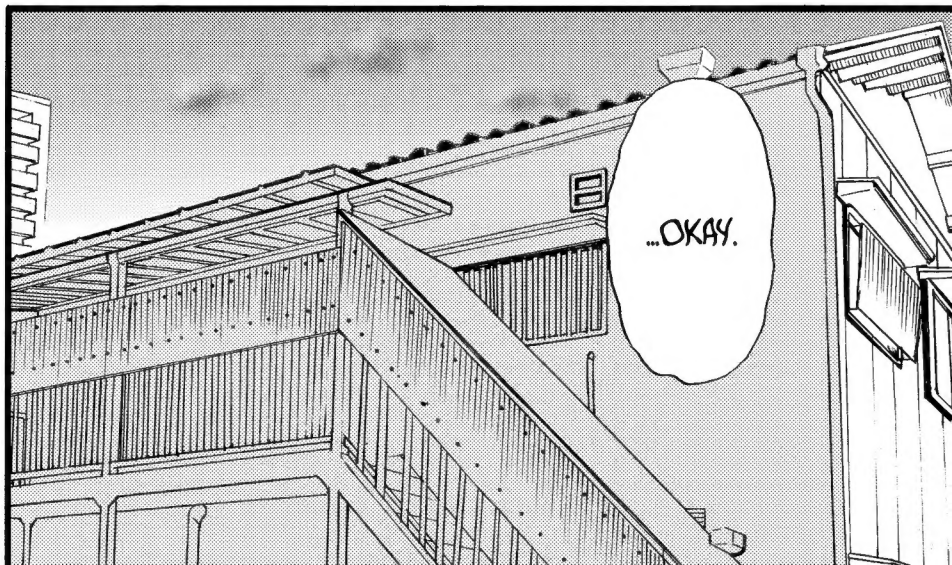
BECAUSE I WAS BORN, MOTHER AND FATHER ARE UNHAPPY, SO...
I... DON'T WANT TO BE A BOTHER...

REALLY, IT'S NOT THE WORLD THAT SHOULD END. IT'S ME...

MIYAKE-KUN, YOU WERE RIGHT WHEN YOU SAID THAT THE WORLD MIGHT END ONE DAY.

Clench
THAT'S ABSOLUTELY NOT TRUE.

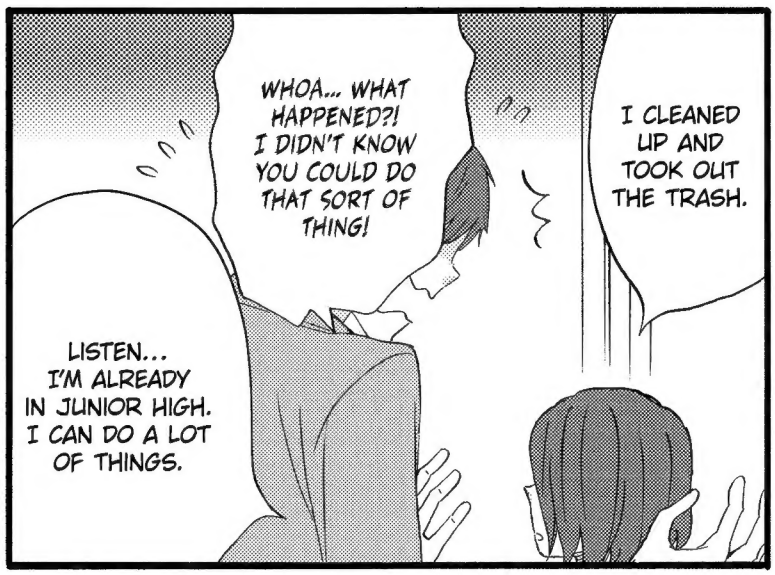
BUT UNTIL THEN, IT'S A SHAME IF YOU DON'T ENJOY LIFE!

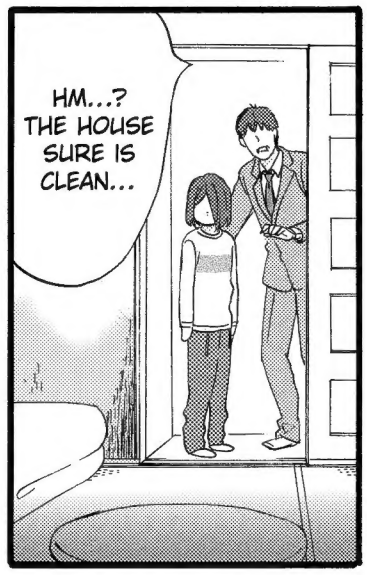

...OKAY.

AHH! YOU MUST BE STARVING!
FATHER...
Stomp
Stomp
I'M SORRY. I WAS CARELESS AND FORGOT TO GIVE YOU MONEY...!!

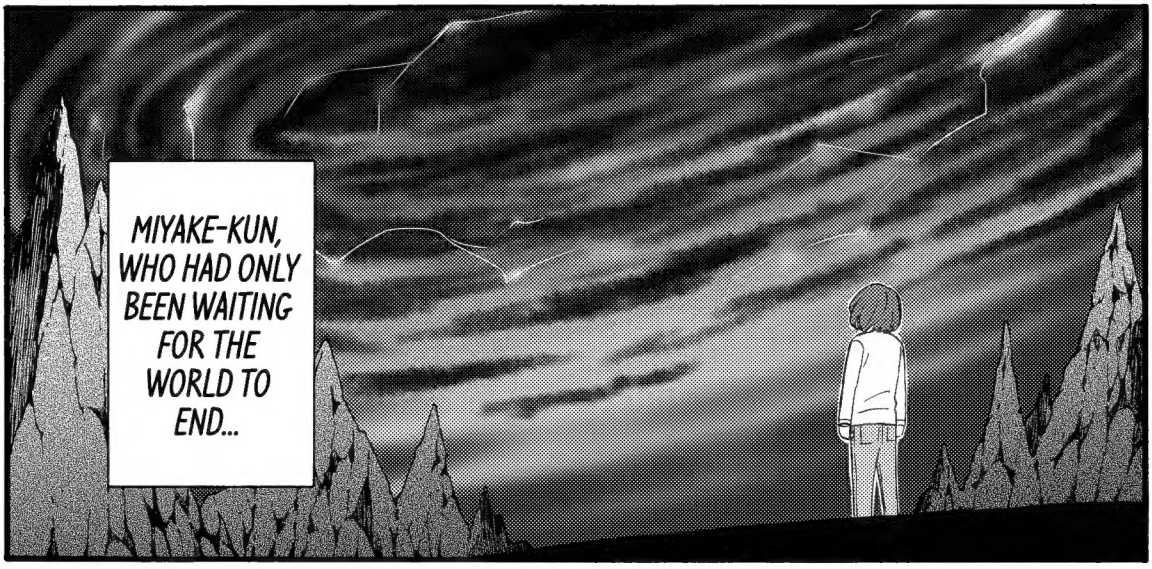
Slam
I'M HOOOME! JUN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!!

TRUE. I WAS IN TROUBLE...
I'M SOOOORRY!!
I ONLY NOTICED LAST NIGHT, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A CELL PHONE... I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...!!
I'M THE WORST! THE WORST FATHER EVER!! I'M SO SORRY!!!


WHOA... WHAT HAPPENED?! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD DO THAT SORT OF THING!
I CLEANED UP AND TOOK OUT THE TRASH.
LISTEN... I'M ALREADY IN JUNIOR HIGH. I CAN DO A LOT OF THINGS.


HM...? THE HOUSE SURE IS CLEAN...

JUN...
YOU CAN ALSO RELY ON ME MORE, FATHER.
I CAN'T BE A POOR KID WHO WAS ABANDONED BY HIS MOTHER FOREVER.


MIYAKE-KUN, WHO HAD ONLY BEEN WAITING FOR THE WORLD TO END...

OH! COME ON IN!
HELLO...!
DECIDED THAT UNTIL THAT HAPPENED, PERHAPS LIVING MIGHT NOT BE SO BAD.